

Message Text

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41

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 USIE-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 ACDA-07 /070 W

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O R 041243Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1689

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, LE

SUBJECT: SECOND HOUGHTON-MACK MISSION

REF: BEIRUT 7252

1. SUMMARY: SECOND HOUGHTONMACK MISSION TO CHRISTIAN
LEBANON MARKED BY ABSENCE OF SPECULATION IN BEIRUT PRESS ON
CHANGE IN US ATTITUDE TOWARDS PARTITION OR POSSIBILITY OF
ESTABLISHMENT OF US DIPLOMATIC OFFICE IN CHRISTIAN AREA.
NEW SPECULATIONS CENTER ON SUPPOSED US CONCERN ABOUT SOVIET
INFLUENCE IN LEBANON AND SUPPOSED SHIFT IN MIDDLE EAST
POWER BALANCE. ACCORDING TO PRESS, HOUGHTON AND MACK
MEETING MOSTLY WITH SAME KFOUR LEADERS SEEN ON FIRST VISIT.
END SUMMARY.

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2. HOUGHTON AND MACK ARRIVED JUNIEH 0700 SEPTEMBER 1.

BEIRUT PRESS GENERALLY CARRIED STORY LOW-KEY WITHOUT SPEULATION. BEIRUT PRESS REPORTED THEY VISITED MICHEL KHOURY BEFORE LUNCH THAT DAY AND MARONITE PATRIARCH KHOREICH FOR TWO HOURS LATE IN AFTERNOON. AN NAHAR QUOTES HOUGHTON AND MACK SAYING THEIR MISSION WAS TO GATHER INFORMATION AND UNDERSTANDING, DOING WORK WHICH US EMBASSY WOULD HAVE DONE IF SECURITY CONDITIONS PERMITTED, AND NOT TO PRESENT SOLUTIONS. PHALANGIST RADIO SPECULATED THAT US ENVOYS WOULD TELL KFOUR LEADERS OF US OPPOSITION TO PARTITION ADDING, "EVEN IF THIS SHOULD CALL FOR ITS INTERVENTION MILITARILY."

3. PRESS REPORTED SEPTEMBER 3 THAT HOUGHTON/MACK MET FOR ONE-AND-A-HALF HOURS ON SEPTEMBER 2 WITH FRANGIE, CHAMOUN, EDWARD HONEIN, CARLOS KHOURY AND NAJIB DAHDAH(SECRETARY GENERAL OF FOREIGN MINISTRY), FOLLOWED BY LUNCH AS PRESIDENT'S GUESTS. ENVOYS MET CHARBEL CASSIS AND OTHER MARONITE MONASTIC LEADERS IN LATE AFTERNOON, AND HAD DINNER WITH MICHEL KHOURY. PAPER SPECULATED THAT ENVOYS' VISIT WAS "MOVE TO COUNTER PRESENT ACTIVE SOVIET MOVES." BOTH AN NAHAR AND AS SAFIR SPECULATED THAT US IS NOW CONCERNED ABOUT BALANCE OF POWER IN MIDDLE EAST IN LIGHT OF EVENTS IN KUWAIT. AS SAFIR SAID US HAS NEW AWARENESS OF SOVIET INVOLVEMENT IN LEBANON.

4. SEPTEMBER 3, ENVOYS REPORTEDLY MET EARLY IN DAY WITH PIERRE GEMAYEL. L'ORIENT QUOTES GEMAYEL AFTERWARDS AS SAYING US AND OTHER GREAT POWERS WERE WMPLICATED IN LEBANESE WAR AND ASKING RHETORICALLY HOW LONG POWERFUL NATIONS WOULD CONTINUE TO PLAY WITH DESTINY OF SMALL COUNTRIES, CONTRARY TO UN CHARTER AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS. HOUGHTON AND MACK HAD LUNCH WITH MINISTER OF LABOR AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS GHASSAN TUENI. AT 1630 THEY CALLED ON PRESIDENT-ELECT SARKIS. IN THE EVENING, THEY WERE CALLED UPON AT MONTEMAR HOTEL BY DORY CHAMOUN FOR TWO HOURS.

5. UPI WEST BEIRUT OFFICE CALLED EMBASSY EARLY SEPTEMBER 3 TO VERIFY REPORT FROM UPI REPORTER IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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JOUNIEH TO EFFECT THAT A THIRD US DIPLOMAT OR REPRESENTATIVE HAD ARRIVED JOUNIEH LATE SEPTEMBER 2. EMBASSY PRESS OFFICER SAID HE HAD NO KNOWLEDGE OF ANY SUCH ADDITION TO HOUGHTON-MACK PARTY, AND DOUBTED IT. LANE

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